

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
BEAUMONT DIVISION

THOMAS EUGENE DUNHAM	§	
VS.	§	CIVIL ACTION NO. 1:24-cv-64
DIRECTOR, TDCJ-CID	§	

MEMORANDUM ORDER REGARDING TRANSFER

Petitioner Thomas Eugene Dunham, an inmate confined at the Stiles Unit of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Correctional Institutions Division, proceeding *pro se*, filed this Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2254.

Discussion

Petitioner challenges a conviction he received in Tarrant County, Texas in cause number 1244817D. Petitioner contends that the court of conviction was a court of admiralty-maritime martial law instead of a court of common law. Petitioner bases this assertion on the flag allegedly being flown in the court at the time of his trial. Therefore, according to Petitioner, the court of conviction did not have jurisdiction over him.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2241(d), a petitioner may bring his Petition for Writ of Habeas Corpus in the district court for the district wherein such person is in custody or in the district court for the district within which he was convicted. Section 2241(d) further provides that the district court in the exercise of its discretion may transfer the action to the other district in the furtherance of justice.

Petitioner is currently confined at the Stiles Unit in Beaumont, Texas which is located in the Eastern District of Texas. However, Petitioner was convicted and sentenced in Tarrant County, Texas. Pursuant to 28 U.S.C § 124, Tarrant County is in the Fort Worth Division of the Northern District of Texas.

While jurisdiction is proper in the Eastern District of Texas because the prisoner is confined within the district court's territorial boundaries, the court has considered the circumstances and has

determined that the interests of justice would best be served if this petition were transferred to the division in which the Petitioner was convicted.

Under 28 U.S.C. § 1404(a), for the convenience of parties and witnesses and in the interest of justice, a district court may transfer any civil action to any other district or division where it could have been brought. Such a transfer may be done *sua sponte* and is reviewable only for an abuse of discretion. *Mills v. Beech Aircraft Corp.*, 886 F.2d 758, 761 (5th Cir. 1989).

Since Petitioner complains of a conviction which occurred in the Fort Worth Division of the Northern District of Texas and all records and witnesses involving this action may be located in the Northern District, the transfer of this action to such division would further justice. Therefore, it is the opinion of the undersigned that this petition should be transferred to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas, Fort Worth Division. Accordingly, it is

ORDERED that the Clerk of Court will **TRANSFER** this action to the Clerk of Court for the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas, Fort Worth Division.

SIGNED this the 26th day of February, 2024.



Christine L Stetson
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE